

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims pending in the instant application are numbered 1 and 3-73. Claims 13-16, 18, 23, 28, 30-47, 51, 53, 57 and 69-73 have been withdrawn from consideration. The Applicant notes with appreciation that claims 1, 3-12, 17 and 19-22 have been allowed. Claims 48-50, 54-56 and 58-68 presently stand rejected and claim 52 presently stands objected to. Claim 52 has been canceled without prejudice and claims 48, 60 and 61 have been amended in an earnest effort to expedite a timely allowance of the instant application. The Applicant respectfully requests that the amendments be entered and that the instant application be reconsidered in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Objections

In the November 1, 2005 Office Action, claims 48, 60 and 61 are objected to because of informalities. Claims 48, 60 and 61 have been amended as suggested in the November 1, 2005 Office Action to cure the inadvertent typographical errors identified in the Office Action. Accordingly, the Applicant respectfully requests that the objections to claims 48, 60 and 61 be withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103 Rejections

In the November 1, 2005 Office Action, claims 48-50, 54-56 and 58-65 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by any one of Limmer et al., Liu et al., Trevino et al. and Randazzo. In addition, claims 66-68 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over any one of Limmer et al., Liu et al., Trevino et al. and Randazzo. .

However, in the November 1, 2005 Office Action, claim 52 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but is indicated as being conditionally allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to expedite a timely allowance, the Applicant has amended claim 48 to embody the limitations included in conditionally allowed claim 52. The Applicant understands independent claim 48 should now be allowable as amended in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in the Office Action of November 1, 2005. The Applicant further understands that all remaining rejected dependent claims 49, 50, 54-56, 58-65 and 66-68, all of which depend on independent claim 48, should now be allowable if the independent claim is deemed allowable. The Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application as amended.

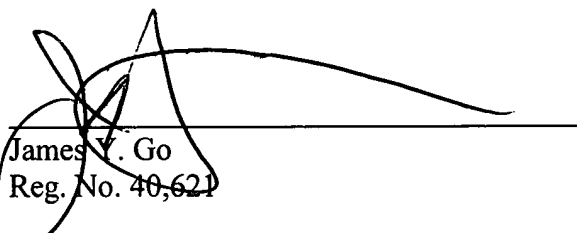
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The Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: 1-31-06


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